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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to clarify the structure of positive and negative parenthood motivations, a series of factor analyses were performed on importance ratings of empirically generated reasons for and against having a child. Findings were: (1) evidence for bipolar factors is weak; (2) both positive and negative motivations have a moderately strong single common factor, but are more adequately represented by more complex factor structures; (3) males and females show several strikingly similar motives, but sex specific factors argue for sex specific description and investigation of parenthood motivations; (4) 10 positive and 12 negative interpretable factors were identified for females while 17 positive and 12 negative interpretable factors were identified for males. (Author)

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MOTIVES FOR AND AGAINST HAVING A CHILD

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MOTIVES FOR AND AGAINST HAVING A CHILD

After initially discouraging yields in the search for psychological determinants of fertility, (e.g., Westoff, Potter, Sagi, & Mishler, 1961; Whelpton & Kiser, 1959), psychologists have continued with increasing sophistication and success to pursue an understanding of the attitudes and values of individuals which influence their fertility related behaviors. Certainly, "it is individual men and women, not cohorts or social strata, who have babies" (Smith, 1973, p. 4). We should, therefore, expect that variables at the level of the individual mediate the variations which occur on an aggregate or demographic level. Further, individual psychological variables can be expected to account for variations in fertility behaviors which are not related to demographic variables.

Prominent among the psychological aspects of fertility which recent researchers have studied is that class of cognitive-motivational constructs variously labeled parenthood motivations, values of children, satisfactions and costs of children, attitudes toward children, etc. Whatever the label, and we shall use the terms motive and motivation, the data of this area of research are the verbal representations of covert events (thoughts, feelings, images) regarding childbearing and child rearing which are recognized by the individual and disclosed to the investigator via interview or questionnaire responses. The identification and classification of these motives, however, has varied across investigators.

Several logical or conceptual categorizations have been developed both to explain why people have children and to attempt to predict various fertility related behaviors. An important theoretical framework for conceptualizing variation in fertility behavior was contributed by Hoffman (1972) and Hoffman and Hoffman (1973). They specified various values and costs of children to parents as components of this model. In one of a series of cross-national studies of the value of children, Fawcett, Albores, and Arnold (1972) were guided by this conceptual scheme. During pilot work, however, they developed a somewhat different structure of general and specific advantages and disadvantages of children. In other work in the cross-national series of studies, Bulatao (1975) and Arnold and Fawcett (1975) utilized a similar, but again modified, scheme of advantages and disadvantages.

Other investigators have used different perspectives and methodologies to encompass and conceptualize the domain of motivations for parenthood. Beach, Townes, Campbell, and Keating (1976) began with statements gleaned from the literature. These items were gradually modified by successive small samples of respondents into a hierarchically structured set of

utilities (values) to which individuals could ascribe either positive or negative valence. Terhune (1972) developed a categorized list of values from several sources and Beckman (1976) generated positive and negative motivations through response content analyses.

These conceptual systems, whether theoretical or ad hoc, show a lack of consensus regarding how many motivation dimensions describe the domain and what these dimensions are. Further, the existing schemes vary in apparent comprehensiveness; one cannot be confident that the domain of motives is adequately encompassed. A related issue is the usefulness of these systems and the confidence which can be put in resultant findings across researchers. To begin with, the reporting of interrater reliabilities for those systems is astonishingly rare, and one cannot be sure if adequate reliability exists in the original studies. More importantly, we suspect that poor delineation of category contents and boundaries leads other investigators who attempt to use the systems to be unable to achieve satisfactory interrater reliability in using them to classify free response data (Kirchner, Straw, Seaver, & Vegega, 1976).

Given the proliferation and possible shortcomings of theoretical and arm chair approaches to the classification of parenthood motivations, we undertook this study to see if clarification of the structure would result from a factor analytic approach. It represents one step in an effort to empirically develop and validate a set of scales for assessing parenthood motives.

Method

This study was conducted in two phases. The objective of the first phase was to develop pools of reasons people articulate for having a child and for not having a child that were as extensive as possible. In the second phase ratings were obtained of the personal importance of reasons for and against having a child. Factor analyses were performed on these ratings to determine a simple structure of underlying dimensions of motivation for having and not having a child.

Phase 1: Development of Item Pools

Respondents in the first phase were 338 college students recruited from introductory psychology classes who received course credit for their participation. They were predominantly unmarried and childless. These students responded to a questionnaire in which they were asked to list as many reasons as they could think of for having a child and then to list all the reasons they could think of for not having a child. The questionnaires were administered in group sessions.

Respondents typically listed 6-10 reasons for and 6-10 reasons for not having a child. The resulting pools consisting of hundreds of positive and negative reasons were combined with those generated by a similar method in a previous study (Kirchner, 1973) and others gleaned from the empirical literature. Removing duplicate and redundant items left pools of 100 positive reasons and 100 negative reasons which we judged to represent more or less completely the content of the combined pools. Items were edited to an infinitive format ("to have the warmth and closeness of a family") or to "because" statements ("because I'm financially unable to support a child").

Phase 2: Identifying Parenthood Motives

Sample. The sample for the second phase consisted of 245 males and 258 females recruited by introductory psychology students in their home towns during a holiday recess. By design all respondents were married or living together and were in their childbearing years and were to be recruited as couples. In age the sample ranged from 17 to 51 with the 10th and 90th percentiles at 21 and 35 years respectively. Their place of residence ranged from large city (13 percent) and suburbs (25 percent) to small cities (24 percent), small towns (24 percent) and rural areas (13 percent). The majority of respondents were white (94 percent); 4 percent were black; and the remainder were Spanish American or Oriental. Occupations of respondents were diverse although professional or managerial occupations were heavily represented (35 percent). Twelve percent were in clerical or sales occupations; 17 percent were skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled laborers; 11 percent were students; and 18 percent were unemployed or housewives. While this sample is not representative of any specific population, it is sufficiently heterogeneous that relationships among variables obtained from the sample, including factor structures, are likely to be generalizable.

Questionnaire. The 100 items describing reasons for having a child were presented in a questionnaire under the heading, "Reasons why I would want to have a child now or in the near future." Each item was followed by a verbally anchored rating scale consisting of eight response alternatives ranging from "extremely important to me" to "extremely unimportant to me." Intermediate alternatives were anchored by very, moderately, and slightly important; slightly, moderately, and very unimportant. In the same format the 100 items describing reasons for not having a child were presented under the heading, "Reasons why I would not want to have a child now or in the near future." Within sections of the questionnaire the order of pages was counterbalanced to reduce possible order effects. Instructions asked the respondent to rate how important each reason was to him or her "now or in the near future" and stressed the importance of rating both positive and negative reasons regardless of whether the respondent did or did not want to have a child at that time. To insure anonymity, the instructions asked respondents not to identify themselves on the questionnaire.

Administration. Questionnaires were delivered to respondents at their homes by introductory psychology students during a December holiday recess. Both members of the couple were asked to fill out separate questionnaires and seal them in the manilla envelopes accompanying the questionnaires. The completed questionnaire packets were collected by the students who returned them to their instructors. The students were given instruction in how to present the questionnaires to respondents, but the details of their interactions with respondents were highly variable.

Analyses. Both principal components and principal factors analyses were performed on data from the males alone, females alone, and both sexes combined. Importance ratings of reasons for having a child and against having a child were analyzed separately in each sample and then together to determine whether bipolar factors would emerge. Following each analysis, extracted factors having eigenvalues greater then 1.0 were rotated to oblique (oblimin criterion) and orthogonal (varimax criterion) simple structures. The eigenvalues for the first unrotated factors were examined to determine whether the simplest explanation of total common variance might be a single dominant underlying variable. Following a procedure outlined by Knapp (1976), more complex factor structures were examined only if the first unrotated factors did not explain nearly all of the variance. Next, the structures obtained from oblique rotation were examined, and correlations between factors were computed to determine the degree of obliqueness. High factor intercorrelation would indicate the probable existence of second-order factors, while low correlations would suggest that orthogonal solutions would be appropriate. The orthogonal solutions were examined and interpreted if there was insufficient evidence of obliqueness. All analyses were performed using the SPSS subprogram FACTOR (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1975).

Results

The results of the principal factors analyses were in all cases less interpretable then the corresponding factors extracted by principal components analyses. It was decided that the more meaningful analyses should be presented. The attempt to investigate possible bipolar factors containing both positive and negative reasons was abandoned when correlation matrices showed surprisingly few negative correlations between reasons for having a child and reasons against having a child. The virtual independence of these reasons made it unlikely that any bipolar factors would emerge. Finally, factor analyses on data from the combined male and female samples led to less interpretable factor structures than the separate sex analyses, obscured possibly important sex differences in motives, and produced a profusion of small unique factors. Thus, only the principal components analyses performed separately for males and females will be presented.

Positive Factors: Reasons for Having a Child

For females, nineteen factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were extracted from ratings of the importance of reasons for having a child. For males, twenty factors met this criterion. Table 1 shows the eigenvalues of these factors along with cumulative percent of total variance accounted for and the percent of common variance explained by each factor. The nineteen female factors accounted for 70.0 percent of the total variance while the twenty male factors accounted for 71.9 percent.

To determine the degree to which common variance might be explained by a single latent variable, the first unrotated factors were examined. For females the first factor had an eigenvalue of 32.23 and explained 46 percent of the common variance. Of the one hundred variables, ninety-three loaded greater than .40 and ninety-seven loaded higher than .30 on this factor. For males the eigenvalue was 35.95, and the first factor explained 50 per ent of the common variance; all variables loaded greater then .30 and ninety-seven had loadings greater than .40. These values suggest that a moderately strong underlying variable contributes common variance to all (or nearly all) items for both males and females; but sufficient common variance remains unexplianed to warrant the presentation of more complex factor structures.

The next question was whether the remaining common variance was explainable by a set or orthogonal factors or whether a smaller number of higher order factors might be present. Oblique rotations to the oblimin criterion were performed on the female and male factors, and correlations among the factors were computed. The range of factor correlations for females was from -.34 to .34. However, only four of the 171 coefficients had absolute values as great as .30, and 78 percent had values less than .20. For males the range was from -.26 to .31 with only one as great as .30 and 82 percent below .20. The few moderate correlations prevent us from ruling out altogether the possibility of the existence of one or more higher order factors. Nevertheless, the majority of these correlations point to a high degree of independence among the factors and suggest that there is insufficient obliqueness in the data to warrant a search for higher order factors. Therefore, the orthogonal rotations were interpreted.

For interpretation, factors were defined by variables loading greater than .40. Most of the factors of reasons for having children for both males and females had sufficient consistency of content in their high loading items to be interpretable. Table 2 describes the orthogonally rotated factors for females in terms of the subjective interpretation we gave them along with the number of high loading (> .40) items, average importance ratings of the defining items, percent of variance accounted for, and examples of defining items. Table 3 presents the same information on the factors for males.

Table 1

Unrotated Factors of Reasons for Having a Child for Females and Males

Female				Male			
Factor	Eigenvalue	Cumulative % variance	% of common variance	Factor	Eigenvalue	Cumulative % variance	% of common variance
1	32.23	32.2	46	1	35.95	36.0	50
2	7.77	40.0	11	2	7.60	43.6	11
3	3.78	43.8	5	3	3.06	46.6	4
4	2.83	46.8	4	4	2.38	49.0	3
5	2.71	49.3	4	5	2.09	51.1	3
6	2.41	51.7	3	6	1.97	53.1	3
7	1.99	53.7	3	7	1.92	55.0	3
8	1.92	55.6	3	8	1.69	56.7	2
9	1.85	57.5	3	9	1.62	58.3	2
10	1.55	59.0	2	10	1.57	59.9	2
11	1.51	60.5	2	11	1.47	61.3	2
12	1.42	62.0	2	12	1.44	62.8	2
13	1.30	63.3	2	13	1.32	64.1	2
14	1.25	64.5	2	14	1.28	65.4	2
15	1.18	65.7	2	15	1.23	66.6	2
16	1.17	66.9	2	16	1.13	67.7	2
17	1.13	68.0	2	17	1.09	68.8	2
18	1.03	69.0	1	18	1.05	69.9	2
19	1.00	70.0	1	19	1.02	70.9	1
				20	1.01	71.9	1

Table 2

Orthogonally Rotated Positive Factors for Females

Factor	Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
1. Pragmatism and Normative Behavior	12	2.09	6.79
To have someone who could add to the family income			
To have someone who could help me or the family with the work			
So I wouldn't have to cope with people wondering why I didn't have children			
Because it's generally assumed that when you marry, eventually children are to follow			
2. Opportunity for personal growth	9	5.78	6.14
To be able to learn as well as teach			
To teach me a great deal			
To experience the simple beauty of a child			
3. Immortality	7	3.03	5.29
To be like a mark left by me on this world			
To carry on my goals when I am dead			
To carry on the family talents			
4. Experiencing the birth process	8	5.09	5.18
To experience the birth process			
To actually be a part of the creation of another human being			
To participate in what seems like a miracle			
5. Experiencing love and life's fuller meaning	7	5.80	4.41
To live a full life			
To have the warmth and closeness of a family			
To give life a fuller meaning			
6. Remembering and reexperiencing own childhood	4	3.70	3.38
To remind me of my own childhood			
To have a family like the one I grew up in			
7. Old age insurance	3	3.70	2.54
To have someone to stand by me when I am old			
To prevent loneliness for a couple			
To be a comfort in my old age			

Table 2 (continued)

Factor	Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
8. Partnership benefits	2	4.65	2.42
To bring my spouse and me closer together			
To deepen the relationship with my partner			
9. Sculptor I	2	5.20	1.90
To see the effects of raising children according to my ideals			
To mold someone with characteristics I believe are important			
10. Sculptor II	2	4.95	1.73
To be able to give someone my values and ideals			
To enjoy teaching things I really like and know about			
11. Deeper love	2	3.95	2.08
To have a love even greater than husband-wife love			
To have someone to share the things that can't be shared with my spouse			
12. Fulfillment through nurturance	26	4.31	12.11
To feel really useful			
To provide a reason for my existence			
To have someone to take care of			
13. Childrearing aspirations	3	4.03	3.45
To raise a child as I would like to have been brought up			
To try not to make the mistakes I feel my parents made with me			
To produce someone who may be able to change the world for the better			
14. Social conformity	7	2.07	3.12
To have children like most of my friends do			
To please my parents			
To show I am a sexually mature person and able to reproduce			
15. Sex role fulfillment	2	4.00	2.22
To fulfill my role as a man (woman)			
Because part of being a man (woman) is to have children			

Table 2 (continued)

Factor	Loading > Mean	Mean Importance	% Variance
16. Stimulation and feeling of pride	4	5.50	2.21
To experience the challenge of parenthood			
To have someone I can be proud of			
To have the constant change and stimulation that children bring			
17. Ethnic continuity	2	2.30	1.81
To carry on my racial or ethnic heritage			
18. Vicarious fulfillment	2	4.35	1.67
To live another life, almost, experiencing through my child			
To give me something to live for			
19. Unlabeled	2	4.95	1.57
To make my partner happy			
Because if something ever happened to my spouse, the child would be something we had shared and would remind me of my spouse			

Table 3

Orthogonally Rotated Positive Factors for Males

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
1. Pragmatism and normative behavior	22	2.32	11.39
To strengthen a difficult marriage			
To inherit the family money and property			
To have children like most of my friends do			
To help my parents realize that I have grown up			
2. Opportunity for personal growth	2	4.10	1.71
To teach me a great deal			
To help me become a more responsible and mature adult			
3. Immortality	4	2.98	2.73
To be like a mark left by me on the world			
To carry on my goals when I am dead			
To carry on the family name			
4. Experiencing the birth process	5	4.20	3.48
To actually grow something alive and human inside me (or my partner)			
To experience the birth process			
5. Experiencing love and life's fuller meaning	31	5.03	12.79
To live a full life			
To have the warmth and closeness of a family			
To experience the honesty and freshness of children			
6. Remembering and reexperiencing own childhood	4	3.60	2.97
To remind me of my own childhood			
To have a family like the one I grew up in			
To reexperience things I can no longer do			
7. Old age insurance	3	3.67	2.85
To have someone to stand by me when I am old			
To be a comfort in my old age			
To prevent loneliness for a couple			
8. Partnership benefits	2	4.45	2.55
To bring my spouse and me closer together			
To make my partner happy			

Table 3 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
9. Sculptor	11	4.57	7.97
To be able to give someone my values and ideals To raise a child as I would like to have been brought up To share my view of what life is all about			
10. Deeper love	1	3.90	1.88
To have a love even greater than husband-wife love			
11. Desire to be needed and loved	3	4.37	2.94
To be needed To be loved To have someone to take care of			
12. Religious obligations	2	3.10	3.07
To follow religious teachings and beliefs To fulfill the obligation to be fruitful and multiply			
13. Financial utility	5	1.98	2.38
To have someone who could help me or the family with work To have someone who could add to the family income			
14. Adding interest to family life	2	3.95	2.04
To liven up the family To add interest to home life			
15. Trait continuity	2	3.65	2.11
To carry on the family talents To carry on the good traits of my partner or me			
16. Desire for independence and betterment	2	3.60	1.89
To become independent of my family by having a family of my own To be able to give the child better things than I had			
17. Fun	2	5.90	2.01
To have fun doing things with my child To experience the sheer entertainment that children can provide			

Table 3 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
18. Single item factor	1	4.10	2.03
To give me something to live for			
19. Unlabeled	2	4.10	1.54
To provide a reason for my existence Because if something ever happened to my spouse, the child would be something we had shared and would remind me of my spouse			
20. Unlabeled	0	-	1.59

Comparison of Male and Female Positive Factors

There was a high degree of correspondence between a number of male and female positive factors. Although the items loading on these factors were not identical for males and females, there was sufficient similarity in the content of high loading items to give them common names. The first ten female factors are presented in the same order as corresponding male factors to facilitate comparisons.

The first factor contains two distinct clusters of item content, one dealing with practical matters, the other relating to social norms and expectations. For both sexes this was one of the lowest factors in the mean importance ratings of the items, but it accounted for an important proportion of common variance. The second factor consists of items describing the personal growth and learning that come from having a child. This factor was larger for females in terms of number of high loading items and proportion of common variance. The third and fourth factors are highly similar in both sexes and are self explanatory.

The fifth factor, Experiencing love and life's fuller meaning, was the largest factor for males with many high loading items, a relatively high mean importance rating, and a substantial proportion of the common variance. For females, the factor was smaller, but the items were of high importance. The content of this factor reflected a broad range of positive emotional reactions to the rich relationships people might have with children and the fullness of life resulting from these relationships.

Factor 6, Remembering & reexperiencing one's own childhood, Factor 7, Old age insurance, and Factor 8, Partnership benefits, were highly similar in both sexes. The items focused on rather specific objectives and were rated as slightly unimportant on the average.

The ninth factor for males corresponds to two similar factors for females, and all have been labeled Sculptor. The content of these factors reflects a desire to mold, shape, direct, and exert influence over a child and his developing values. The male Sculptor factor accounts for a moderate proportion of common variance, but the two female Sculptor factors combined account for less variance.

The final factor common to both males and females was called Deeper love. This was a small factor reflecting the qualitatively different love people can have for children.

The remaining factors were unique to males or females. Of these, female Factor 12, Fullfillment through nurturance, is of major importance. This factor had many high loading items and accounted for more variance than any other. Its content reflects a need to give life meaning through caring for others and through fulfilling traditional female sex role

expectations. From a more negative perspective, this factor implies that a woman might feel useless or that life had no meaning if she had no children to care for and nurture.

A second female factor (Factor 13) was concerned with the woman's desire to raise a child properly and without repeating her parents' mistakes. Conformity to social norms and pressures constituted female Factor 14. Contrary to the importance ascribed to social conformity by social scientists, the importance ratings given by the respondents for this factor were the lowest of any found. The remaining female factors were concerned with the stimulation and pride of parenthood (Factor 16), carrying on one's ethnic heritage (Factor 17), and vicariously experiencing life through a child (Factor 18). Although the mean importance of items in Factor 16 was relatively high, none of these factors accounted for 5 percent of the common variance.

A number of factors were identified for males which had no exact counterpart for females. The first of these (Factor 11) reflected a desire to be needed and loved. While this is similar to female Factor 12, Fulfillment through nurturance, it contains no items relating to finding a meaning for one's existence or feeling useful. For males, being needed and loved may not be necessary to a sense of fulfillment and personal worth. The remaining male factors were all small and accounted for little variance. They concerned fulfilling religious obligations to multiply (Factor 12), financial utility (Factor 13), adding interest to family life (Factor 14), carrying on one's traits (Factor 15), becoming independent of one's family of origin (Factor 16), and the sheer fun and enjoyment of children (Factor 17). Three other male factors could not be interpreted and were unlabeled.

Negative Factors: Reasons for Not Having a Child

For females, eighteen factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were extracted from their ratings of reasons for not having a child. For males, nineteen factors were extracted which met this criterion. Table 4 presents the eigenvalues for these factors with related statistics. The eighteen female factors accounted for 72.4 percent of the variance, and the nineteen male factors accounted for 73.2 percent of the variance.

As was done with the positive factors, the first unrotated factors were examined for their ability to explain the common variance in terms of a single latent variable. The first female factor, with an eigenvalue of 35.11, explained 48 percent of the common variance, and inspection of the factor loadings showed that all one hundred items loaded higher than .30 and all but one loaded higher than .40. The first male factor, with eigenvalue 34.37, explained 47 percent of the common variance. All items loaded higher than .30, and ninety-nine loaded greater than .40. These

statistics clearly point to a signle factor that is common to all items, but also indicate that this factor does not explain nearly all of the common variance. More complex factor structures were therefore examined.

To determine the plausibility of an orthogonal factor structure, the factors were first rotated to an oblique solution, and the correlations among factors were examined. Correlations among female factors ranged from -.35 to .35, but only seven exceeded .30 and 70 percent were smaller than .20. For male factors the correlations also ranged from -.35 to .35, while only five exceeded .30 and 77 percent were smaller than .20. As with the positive factors, the possibility of higher order factors cannot be ruled out with confidence. However, the large number of small factor correlations suggests the superiority of an orthogonal structure. Therefore, the orthogonal rotation was interpreted.

Tables 5 and 6 present the interpretations of the orthogonally rotated negative factors for females and males. The tables show for each factor the number of high loading (> .40) items, the average importance ratings of the high loading items, and the sum of squared rotated factor loadings (variance accounted for), along with examples of defining items. The conceptual content of these negative factors was considerably more coherent than that of the positive factors, and interpretations tended to be much more obvious.

Comparison of Female and Male Negative Factors

Inspection of Tables 5 and 6 reveals a high degree of similarity in the negative factors obtained for males and females. For both sexes the largest factor involved the restrictions that having a child would impose on one's social and personal life. Being tied down and losing freedom are salient reasons for not having a child. The second factor for both males and females involved concerns about one's ability to be an adequate parent and to give a child sufficient love, attention, and moral training. For males, the next two factors reflected the possibility of a defective child and the dangers of childbirth to the mother. For females, these two reasons were not distinguished as separate factors but are grouped together in a single factor.

A clearly interpretable factor appeared for both sexes to reflect a pessimistic world view. According to this view, the degree of strife and hatred in the world and the threat of nuclear holocaust make the present day world no place to raise a child.

Financial considerations appeared for both sexes as an interpretable factor reflecting one's own financial condition and the perceived high cost of raising a child. Another factor common to both sexes consisted of items describing worries and responsibilities of rearing a child, especially the long-term committment that a child would demand. The discomforts of pregnancy and childbearing constituted another common factor. The last three factors which were highly similar for males and

Table 4

Unrotated Factors of Reasons for Not Having a Child for Females and Males

Female				Male			
Factor	Eigenvalue	Cumulative % variance	% of common variance	Factor	Eigenvalue	Cumulative % variance	% of common variance
1	35.11	35.1	48	1	34.37	34.4	47
2	7.79	42.9	11	2	7.92	42.3	11
3	4.45	47.4	6	3	4.69	47.0	6
4	3.11	50.5	4	4	3.21	50.2	4
5	2.92	53.4	4	5	3.00	53.2	4
6	2.36	55.7	3	6	2.30	55.5	3
7	2.00	57.8	3	7	1.95	57.4	3
8	1.85	59.6	3	8	1.72	59.2	2
9	1.62	61.2	2	9	1.69	60.8	2
10	1.55	62.8	2	10	1.52	62.4	2
11	1.49	64.3	2	11	1.47	63.8	2
12	1.39	65.6	2	12	1.37	65.2	2
13	1.28	66.9	2	13	1.29	66.5	2
14	1.27	68.2	2	14	1.24	67.7	2
15	1.10	69.3	2	15	1.18	68.9	2
16	1.07	70.4	2	16	1.14	70.1	2
17	1.03	71.4	1	17	1.10	71.2	2
18	1.02	72.4	1	18	1.02	72.2	1
				19	1.01	73.2	1

Table 5

Orthogonally Rotated Negative Factors for Females

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
1. Social and personal restrictions	31	3.05	16.19
Because it would tie me down too much			
Because I would lose a lot of freedom			
Because children can limit the kinds of activities in which a couple can participate			
2. Concern about ability to parent	13	2.75	8.36
Because I just don't think I would be a good parent			
Because I might neglect the child			
Because I am afraid I could not love the child enough			
3. Dangers of childbirth and having a defective child	11	3.55	7.77
Because the child might be physically handicapped			
Because the child might be mentally retarded			
Because childbirth may endanger the mother's life			
4. Pessimistic world view	9	3.13	6.41
Because today's world is no place for a child			
Because I don't want to raise a child in a world with so much war and hate			
5. Financial considerations	4	3.83	3.36
Because I simply can't afford it			
Because it takes more financial security than I have			
6. Worries and responsibilities of rearing a child	6	2.88	3.09
Because you have to be responsible to the child for a great part of your life			
Because the child might rebel when he or she grows up			
Because children cause a lot of worry			
7. Discomforts of childbearing	6	2.52	2.89
Because of the discomforts that go with pregnancy			
Because childbearing can be painful			

Table 5 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
8. Population concerns	4	3.33	2.56
Because I want to do my part to control population growth			
Because there are too many kids in the world already			
9. Education and career interference	5	3.56	3.16
Because having a child would interfere with my educational plans			
Because a child would interfere with the mother's career			
Because I couldn't handle both children and a career well			
10. Emotional immaturity	6	3.13	4.14
Because I am not emotionally stable enough			
Because I am still too immature			
11. Unappreciative or embarrassing child	6	2.25	3.20
Because a child can turn out to be a bad reflection on his or her parents			
Because children can be obnoxious brats			
12. Single item factor	1	2.90	1.99
Because a child would mean a difficult adjustment for others in my family			
13. Partnership costs	3	2.57	1.97
Because a child could come between my spouse and me			
Because it would be hard to share the person I love with a child			
14. Single item factor	1	2.80	1.44
Because either my spouse or I might have a hereditary abnormality we might pass on			
15. Single item factor	1	2.70	1.54
Because one of us is too old			
16. Single item factor	1	3.20	1.75
Because I would have to consider the child in the event of a divorce			

Table 5 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
17. Unlabeled	2	2.65	1.76
Because I might repeat the mistake my own parents made			
Because too many outsiders would interfere with how I would raise my child			
18. Single item factor	1	3.10	1.27
Because my spouse might not contribute a fair share in bringing up the child			

Table 6

Orthogonally Rotated Negative Factors for Males

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
1. Social and personal restrictions	34	3.03	16.36
Because I would lose a lot of freedom			
Because it would tie me down too much			
Because children mean I would have to change my life style			
Because my social life would be restricted			
2. Concern about ability to parent	25	2.70	12.72
Because I might neglect the child			
Because I am afraid I couldn't love the child enough			
Because I am afraid I couldn't help my child develop the proper values			
3. Possibility of a defective child	8	3.43	6.50
Because the child might be physically handicapped			
Because the child might be mentally retarded			
4. Dangers of childbirth	2	4.80	2.00
Because childbirth may endanger the mother's health			
Because childbirth may endanger the mother's life			
5. Pessimistic world view	7	2.99	5.72
Because today's world is no place for a child			
Because I don't want to raise a child in a world with so much war and hate			
6. Financial considerations	4	3.70	3.00
Because I simply can't afford it			
Because children are too expensive to raise			
7. Worries and responsibility of rearing a child	7	3.17	2.78
Because children cause a lot of worry			
Because you have to be responsible for the child for a great part of your life			

Table 6 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
8. Discomforts of childbearing	3	3.47	2.75
Because of the discomforts that go with pregnancy			
Because childbearing is a burden on the mother			
9. Population concerns	4	3.10	2.87
Because having a child would mean using up more of the earth's resources			
Because there are too many children in the world already			
10. Education or career interference	2	3.00	1.69
Because having a child would interfere with my educational plans			
Because I could not handle both children and a career well			
11. Emotional immaturity	4	3.18	3.06
Because I am not yet ready emotionally			
Because I do not want so much responsibility			
Because I am still too immature			
12. Job interference	2	3.30	1.68
Because my spouse's or my job requires too much traveling			
Because there would not be enough time to spend with a child with my spouse and me both working			
13. Single item factor	1	2.20	1.44
Because I just don't like children			
14. Unlabeled	4	2.55	2.04
Because I would need more costly housing			
Because I don't want a child to have to face the political problems of our time			
15. Unlabeled	2	2.35	1.99
Because I would need a babysitter when I wanted to go out			
Because I just can't stand diapers			

Table 6 (continued)

Factor	Items Loading > .40	Mean Importance	% Variance
16. Unlabeled	0	-	1.88
17. Single item factor	1	2.60	1.79
Because it would be hard to share the person I love with a child			
18. Unlabeled	2	2.95	1.52
Because one of us is too old Because my spouse is not yet ready emotionally			
19. Single item factor	1	3.20	1.35
Because I can be a whole person without having children			

females focused on population concerns, interference with educational and career plans, and the emotional immaturity of one or both partners.

One small but interpretable factor was found for males for which there was no female counterpart. This male factor (Factor 12) reflected a child's interference with job performance. While the two defining items in this factor seem similar to the content of female Factor 1 labeled Educational or career interference, the items on the male factor are more specific to the particular time and travel requirements of a job.

The remaining seven factors for males are either single item factors or have inconsistent content in their defining items and were unlabeled. Collectively these seven factors accounted for less than 12 percent of the common variance.

For females two factors were identified which did not appear for males. Factor 11, labeled Unappreciative or embarrassing child, was defined by six items which describe possible undesirable behaviors or traits of a child which would, if they came about, be a source of resentment or embarrassment for the parent. The second unique female factor (Factor 13) was defined by three items reflecting the costs to the husband-wife partnership of having a child including the need to share the spouse with a child and the fear that a child would tend to come between the partners.

The remaining six factors for females were eight single item factors or had inconsistent content. Collectively, these six factors accounted for less than 10 percent of the common variance.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine whether motivations for parenthood could be identified through an empirical factor analytical procedure. It was expected that items on which respondents rated the importance of reasons for and against their having a child in the immediate future would load on several distinct factors and, that these factors, if interpretable, would reflect organized and distinct motives.

The factor analyses revealed unipolar rather than bipolar factors. For female respondents there were eighteen interpretable positive factors and twelve interpretable negative factors. For males, seventeen interpretable positive and twelve interpretable negative factors were found. The contents of the male and female factors were similar enough that about half of the positive factors could be given labels common to the two sexes as could ten of the twelve negative factors. However, even where similarity was sufficient to justify common labels, there were sufficient differences in the item content of the factors for males and females to warrant their separate presentation.

Because factors are merely statistical abstractions which are convenient for summarizing common sources of variance in a set of variables, justification must be given for interpreting them as motives. First, the content of the items which respondents rated is important. The items used in this study were all based on free responses to an instruction to state reasons for having (or not having) a child. The pool of reasons generated in this manner was large and of diverse content, and the reasons themselves reflected thoughtful effort by respondents to identify and verbalize why they would and would not want a child. The items used in the importance ratings were representative of the richness of content and the frequency of appearance of these reasons.

Second, the items were rated under instructions which asked the respondent how important each reason was to him or her for having a child now or in the near future. Consistent with psychological theories of motivation, the focus was on short-term rather than long-term planning, and so ratings of the importance of reasons should have reflected the influence of transient situational pressures including developmental stages, financial and employment considerations and the like as well as longer term attitudes and values.

Finally, the obtained factors can be sensibly interpreted as motives. The content of high loading items on most factors extracted was sufficiently consistent to yield clear interpretations based on the reasons that were rated rather than on artifacts of the rating questionnaire such as position, wording style, etc. These interpretations were generally clearer for the negative factors than for positive factors, but all interpretations were arrived at by consensus of several researchers.

Specific comparisons between the factors identified in this study and the parenthood motivations and values and costs of children described by other researchers are difficult because of the several levels of discrimination used and the overlapping classifications of motives. It is apparent that the statistical method we applied and the rational methods others have used to categorize motives result in different category boundaries and extent. Nevertheless, the contents of the motives identified by factor analysis in this study are strikingly similar to the contents of the systems of motivation provided by Hoffman (1972), Fawcett et al. (1972), Arnold & Fawcett (1975), Beach et al. (1976), Terhune (1972), and Beckman (1976). This similarity adds to our confidence in interpreting the obtained factors as motives for and against having a child.

Another question involves the number of motives that need to be considered in research on fertility. Other descriptions of parenthood motives involve anywhere from nine values and eight costs (Hoffman & Hoffman, 1973) to fifty-six values organized into twelve categories

(Terhune, 1972). The eighteen positive and twelve negative motives identified in the present study are the interpretable factors extracted using an arbitrary statistical criterion. There is no assurance that this is "the" number of motives operating in the population sampled. That issue can only be illuminated by a series of validition studies which demonstrate the utility of these constructs for predicting fertility behaviors or their relationships to theoretically similar constructs. However, the present study does provide information that a single undifferentiated motivational construct is probably inadequate. A model of motivation consisting of multiple, possibly independent, motives aroused, maintained, and satisfied by different aspects of a person's experience seems plausible.

Which are the most important motives? The importance ratings given by our heterogenous sample of respondents indicate that none of the motives is of strikingly high importance across individuals and that sex differences are apparent. The aggregate data show that the five positive motives highest in importance were the following (in declining order) for women: Experiencing love and life's fuller meaning, Opportunity for personal growth, Stimulation and feeling of pride, Sculptor, and Experiencing the birth process. For men, the five motives highest in importance were Fun, Experiencing love and life's fuller meaning, Sculptor, Partnership benefits and Desire to be needed and loved. Negative motivations, all having relatively low mean importance ratings include the following as most salient for females: Financial considerations, Education and career interference, Dangers of childbirth and having a defective child, Population concerns, and (tied for fifth place) Emotional immaturity and Pessimistic world view. The most important negative motivations for males were: Dangers of childbirth, Financial considerations, Discomforts of childbearing, Possibility of a defective child, and Job interference.

While the mean importance ratings can give us an indication of how a diverse group rated the items, item variances document considerable inter-individual variability. The answer to the question of which are the most important motives is thus most correctly stated simply and familiarly as "it depends upon the individual." Of course, further analyses of our data and further research may uncover patterns of motives characteristic of subsamples such as working vs. nonworking women, religious groupings and persons with large vs. small desired family size.

For researchers, however, the important kinds of questions about these subjectively rated and publicly disclosed motives concern their predictive and discriminative power. Scales have recently been constructed to measure reliably and efficiently the strength of the majority of the motives identified in this study. These are currently being used in validation studies to predict fertility events and to discriminate between groups known to differ in desire for parenthood. Additional research should be undertaken to relate the motives identified in this

study to similar constructs from other motivational models. Reducing the number of constructs currently being used to explain the individual psychological processes that influence human fertility would be a valuable step to take.

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